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ABSTRACT

Designed to be used by those who wish to initiate or further develop community education programs at the state and local levels, this publication is one of a series of "Proven Practices" developed by federally-funded state and local community education projects. The booklet describes the administrative design and the process used to develop community education in Arkansas. Problems, defeats, and outcomes reached are addressed. The booklet is divided into three chapters. The first describes conditions in Arkansas prior to the initiation of networking strategies, including geographic and population statistics, the educational organization and climate, financial constraints, and the status of community education. It also describes the formation of the Arkansas Community Education Development Association. The second chapter outlines the approach used by Arkansas in developing its community education program, including funding, flexible staffing, board governance, and the Arkansas five-year plan. The third defines and discusses the networking skills necessary to a successful community education program, which include conceptual skills, organizational skills, and communication skills. The booklet highlights the unexpected benefits received from the program and the pitfalls encountered. The final section contains a summary, recommendations, and conclusions. (CM)

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Community Education Proven Practices II

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NETWORKING STRATEGIES

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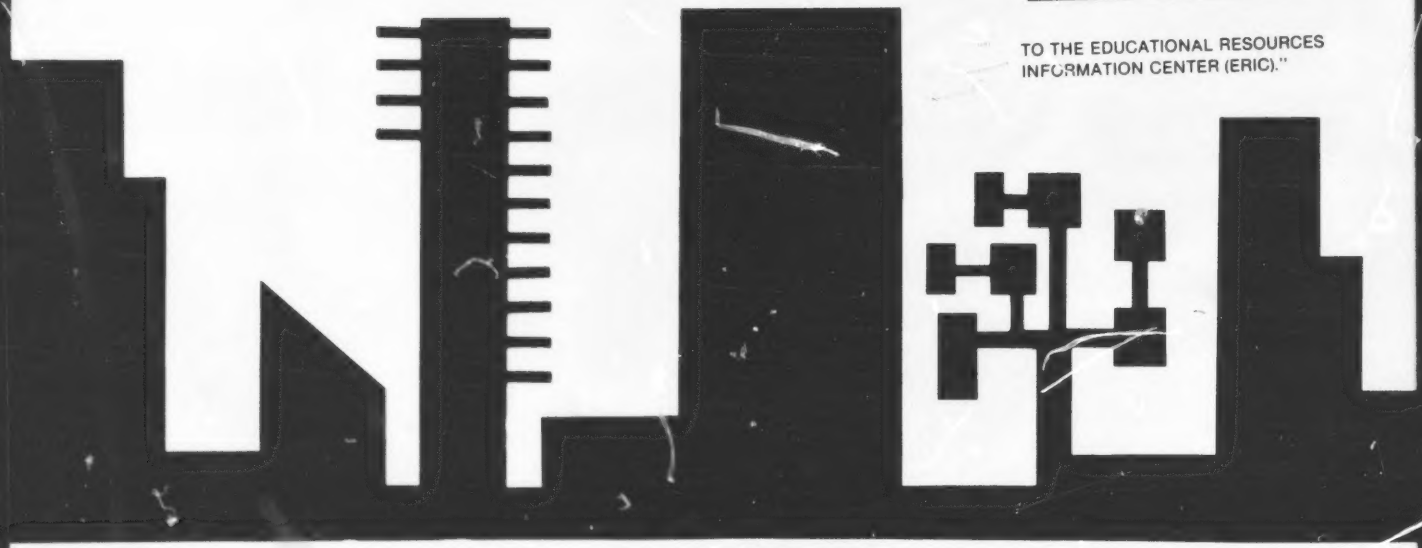

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STATE COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECTS

RC012997

Community Education Proven Practices II

NETWORKING STRATEGIES

Developed persuant to Grant No. G00-8006212 by the Arkansas Department of Education

Martha Nelsen, Project Director

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U. S. Department of Education

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Special recognition is due Dr. Sherman Peterson, Associate Director for Instructional Services with the Arkansas Department of Education. His support and understanding of community education have been sustaining forces for the movement in Arkansas. Dr. Don R. Roberts, Chief State School Officer, deserves the ultimate credit. His leadership exemplifies community education processes in operation.

FOREWORD

Community education is a process of a community coming together to identify their problems and needs and devise solutions. This process, which builds on community awareness and a spirit of self-reliance, often results in various educational programs and social services. Using locally available resources and skills, people work together to accomplish what they cannot accomplish as individuals. Through community education, people are able to make education relevant to their needs, and to make their community a better place to live.

The notion of community education has been gaining acceptance throughout the United States. The Community Schools Act of 1974 initiated the federal government's involvement in community education. This was followed by he Community Schools and Comprehensive Community Education Act of 1978. Through these two acts, the federal government is encouraging multiple use of public facilities; involvement of people of all ages; income levels and ethnic groups; identification by the people of the needs and problems; development of a variety of human services; coordination among diverse agencies and institutions to eliminate duplication and multiple funding sources at the local state, and federal levels.

The federal government has placed primary responsibility within the states for the development of community education. A major federal function has been to assist states in developing their capacity to support the growth of commuinty education by administering a state program and providing quality technical and financial assistance to develop local community education programs.

This publication is one of a series of "Proven Practices" developed by federally-funded state and local community education projects. It is our hope that these publications will be useful to others wishing to initiate or further develop community education programs at the state and local levels. In short, the Federal Government is striving, through such activities as the development of these publications, to stimulate community education programs without taking primary responsibility from state and local levels. It encourages self-sufficiency, efficient use of locally available revenues, quality programs and the sharing of information.

An attempt has been made to make the series as easy to read as possible for those interested in using the material in their own community. Each booklet describes the administrative design, and the community education process used to implement the topic area. Problems, defeats, and outcomes reached are addressed. Each one should be complete within itself.

A good understanding of the publication is recommended in order to duplicate the subject area. Should you have questions concerning the information presented, you should not hesitate to contact the project director for further information and clarification. Personnel at the Centers for Community Education are also available to provide help.

We are continuing to provide support to state educational agency grantees in the future for this type of similar activity. Therefore, we would appreciate your comments and suggestions regarding these publications. I hope that they are helpful to you in your efforts. I wish you the best of luck in your community education endeavors.

Ron Castaldi

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NETWORKING STRATEGIES

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NETWORKING STRATEGIES

I. The Setting--Where We Were

A. Arkansas, a description

1. Geographic; population

Arkansas is considered one of the Southern States--the westernmost state in that region. Approximately two million persons live in Arkansas. About eighteen percent of the state's residents are Black. The high density of White residents are in the northwest section of the state, with some counties being one hundred percent White. The Delta, in the southeast, shows some communities with seventy to eighty percent Black residents. Arkansas' eastern border follows the Mississippi River.

Little Rock, the capital and largest city, is located close to the center of the state. Only a small section in the northwest corner of the state is more than 200 miles from the capital. As the state's largest city, Little Rock has a population of 140,000. North Little Rock and Jacksonville are adjacent to Little Rock, and add an additional 90,000 people to the metropolitan area. Only eight other communities in the state exceed 20,000 population. With the exception of the Little Rock metropolitan area, the entire state may be considered rural by any standards.

Camp Chaffee, near Fort Smith, has been one of the nation's largest receiving stations for Indochinese and Cuban refugees. Many Indochinese have remained in Arkansas, migrating to Little Rock and other areas in the state.

Food processing is the state's leading manufacturing industry. Levi Strauss and Company operates six factories in five Arkansas communities. Other companies include Weyerhaeuser, International Paper, Georgia Pacific, Reynolds Aluminum, Riceland Food, and Potlatch. Arkansas produces more rice than any other state. It also ranks high among producers of cotton and soybeans. The manufacture of lumber and wood products, including paper products, depends on the state's many large forests.

About fifteen million tourists visit Arkansas each year. The state is famous for its spring water and rich natural resources. The only diamond field in North America is in Arkansas. The state's mines produce ninety percent of the nation's bauxite, the ore from which aluminum is made.

There are several retirement communities, especially in northern Arkansas, which draw persons from many other states. Arkansas ranks second nationally in the percentage of its residents over sixty. Only Florida attracts more retirees.

2. Educational organization and climate

The state of Arkansas is divided into three hundred seventy-one school districts, which operate in the seventy-five counties. One hundred eighty-nine of those districts (more than fifty percent) enroll less than five hundred students in grades K-12. Only four districts of the three hundred seventy-one enroll more than ten thousand students, and three of the four are in Pulaski County, which is the metropolitan Little Rock area.

The Quality Education Act, Act 229 of 1969, required that all Arkansas school districts meet state "A" standards. Those standards include offering all twelve grades within a district, so that all districts offer grades K-12 or 1-12. State money has been appropriated for kindergartens, but schools are not required to offer kindergarten, nor are children required to attend. An estimated ninety percent of kindergarten-age children attend kindergarten.

The Quality Education Act required that Arkansas school districts meet certain standards by 1979. This resulted in the reduction of the number of school districts in the state by ten in that year. Consolidation is an emotional issue in the state, and further consolidation is unlikely to occur because the small local districts are fiercely protective of their local communities' identities.

There is no formal regional network of service centers or intermediate units to aid the Department of Education in the delivery of services. Several formal and informal educational cooperatives have been developed to increase/improve specific services. Recently, a grant from the National Institute of Education funded a project to explore kinds of service centers which would be effective in Arkansas as well as geographic configurations which would be appropriate for education service agencies.

The Department of Education staff has remained relatively stable through a chief state school officer's tenure of twenty-six years. Under new leadership, two major educational priorities have surfaced. Those priorities are both aimed at improving student achievement in basic skills.

The study for education service agencies is one strategy; a statewide teacher-training program for instructional skills is the other. Community education is supported conceptually from that office, though it is not one of the top priorities.

3. Financial constraints

The current state school finance system in Arkansas was developed slowly and continues to be frugally modest. It was as recent as 1927 before the state assumed the responsiblity for financing its public schools, and exercised its right to establish standards which local schools were required to follow.

In 1941-42, Arkansas had 2,799 school districts receiving $294,506 in state aid. Educational opportunity varied greatly across the state. Some uniformity was probably gained in 1948 by Initiated Act 1 which significantly reduced the vast number of school districts in the state. The local limit on school mileage was also removed that year.

By 1977-78, the state aid for education produced a pattern of expenditures per pupil of all three hundred eighty-five school districts ranging from $1,747 to $683. There is still substantial disparity among school districts, in financing. Overall, school financing is inadequate and the distribution formula produces deficiencies in funding usually expensive programs.

Arkansas, then, in not only poor, compared to other states, but also puts forth low effort in the development of human capital. The state ranks 40th in the nation in personal income per average daily membership of pupils in the public schools. In comparison to

other states, Arkansas is 49th in its statewide fiscal effort for elementary and secondary schools based on net personal income. Although Arkansas spends a higher than average rate of its education money for salaries, teachers in the state are not paid well compared to the national average.

Educational services are far from uniform across the state. There is an unusually large number of very small school districts. Nearly 30 percent of the state's pupil enrollment is found in school districts with less than 1000 students. School districts with less than 1000 students usually have less than 40 school units offered, while some larger districts offer more than 100. The lack of uniformity is, therefore, significant.

Arkansas teachers, overall, have an educational level comparable to levels of teachers in other states. At the same time, there are wide differences across the state. Some districts have as few as five percent of its teachers with master's degrees, while others have over fifty percent. Almost 30 percent of the teachers statewide have master's degrees.

School facilities also vary widely from district to district. Although these differences occur in many states, the problem in Arkansas appears to be more dramatic in terms of the differences.

4. Status of community education

The Arkansas Department of Education's initial involvement in community education occurred in 1972. At that time, an SEA Associate Commissioner was assigned to represent the Department on an advisory council for community education. That council served to advise the

C. S. Mott Regional Community Education Center at Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas. The Regional Center served Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. The SEA representative and the Dean of the College of Education from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, represented the state on the regional board.

The SEA staff person had for some time had a special interest in community education. The U. of A. Dean brought a strong community education base to Arkansas from his home state of Michigan. The two agreed to stimulate one program each in Arkansas. The Dean selected nearby Rogers, in northwest Arkansas; the Associate Commissioner identified Monticello, in southeast Arkansas. Superintendents of the two districts were contacted, and programs began. Money for the first year at Monticello was secured from (then) Title III through the Department's federal division.

Soon afterwards, the University of Arkansas applied for and received funding from the C. S. Mott Foundation to establish a Cooperating Center, which would operate through the Regional Center at Texas A & M. In the meantime, the Rogers and Monticello programs developed quickly. The Texarkana Model Cities program included a community education component, and programming was initiated in that community. The Dean was instrumental in securing funding for Fayetteville from the Levi Struass Foundation, and that community's adult education program expanded its boundaries with community education.

With the Department of Education's involvement and the involvement at the University, the idea surfaced to approach the Arkansas-based Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to fund rural "models" of community education. The foundation was approached, resulting in the funding of the Rural Community Education Development Project (RCEDP). The

University Center Director and the Superintendent of Monticello Schools were members of the project governing board. The National Community Education Association (NCEA) was the fiscal agent of the project. Monticello was designated as the lead district "model."

Shortly after the initiation of the RCEDP, the Department of Education received a federal grant for community education through the Community Schools Act of 1974, and established the state coordinator's position. That person was designated to serve as technical advisor to the RCEDP board and serve as SEA liaison person with the project.

By this time, then, there were in place three very different agents responsible for community education in Arkansas: 1) the Center Director for a Mott Cooperating Center, 2) the State Education Agency Coordinator; and 3) the Director of the RCEDP, ultimately organized as a private, non-profit entity. The three began coordinating all efforts and exploring ways to more efficiently use limited resources, to stretch the few dollars, and to plan together actively.

Within a year, the Mott Cooperating Center at the University of Arkansas was discontinued. The Department of Education become the Arkansas "center" for the fifth year of the Mott Foundation's five-year plan, recruiting and recommending local education agencies for Mott "seed" grants. At the end of that year the Regional Center at Texas A & M requested that both Arkansas and Louisiana discontinue their funding affiliation with them, because of the size of the area involved. The three states agreed to go their separate ways.

In the meantime, the RCEDP was winding down. By this time the RCEDP Director and the SEA Coordinator had developed many lines of communication, closely coordinating activities so that "project" communities and "non-project" communities could interact and share. Although the RCEDP dealt with only eleven "models," there were approximately twenty-five communities now involved in or planning toward community education.

B. A state association with a dual role

1. Need and rationale

Community education was catching on in Arkansas. State leadership was essential to keep up with the momentum of local communities. With the end in sight for the RCEDP and the discontinuation of the Cooperating Center, it looked like the state leadership was soon to diminish from three agencies to one. There had also begun some very unique networking strategies, since one agency was a large public state agency and the other was a small private non-profit agency.

Another problem that had surfaced was the separation of the two groups of "programs"--those associated with the RCEDP and those not associated with the RCEDP. The RCEDP Director worked primarily with eleven programs in the state which were identified as different kinds of "models." The SEA Coordinator worked with all of the communities interested in and/or involved with community education, including "project" people, but there was little communication between the people in the project communities and those not designated as "models" by the RCEDP. "Project" people were a tightly-knit group; the "non-project" people tended to operate without much communication

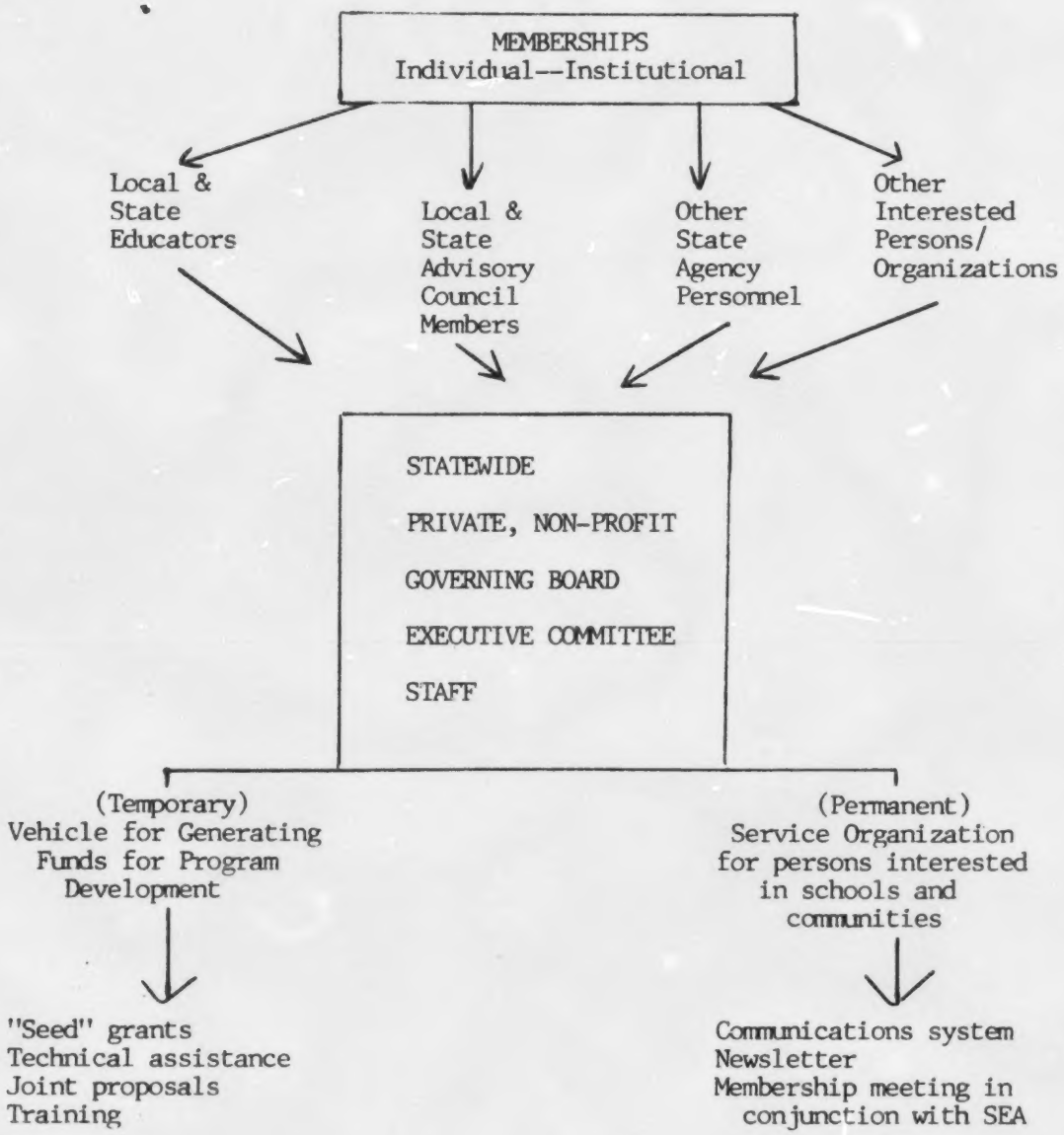
with others. "Project" people tended not to recognize the "non-project" people. "Non-project" people tended to resent the "project" people. There was much to be shared but no real sharing was taking place. The SEA had sponsored a state conference for all communities and that was a beginning, but there was a need to convene the leaders in both groups around a common concern.

As the RCEDP was approaching its final months, the RCEDP Director and the SEA Coordinator jointly convened a meeting of local people across the state. Participants at the meeting were divided into two groups (along project lines) to assess and evaluate the status of community education in Arkansas and make recommendations for the future. Interestingly enough, the two groups who had little contact with one another, came up with very similar problems and needs.

At that meeting of approximately thirty local school people, it was decided to organize a state association with a dual purpose. One purpose would be to provide an association which would serve professionals and non-professionals who had an interest in schools and communities. The Association would provide a communication network to join those individuals and institutions in the way that other State Associations serve persons with like interest and concerns. The other purpose of the association was to provide a vehicle for generating additional money and technical assistance for community education in Arkansas. The Association would employ a small staff which would continue to work at the state level, closely coordinating efforts with the state education agency.

It was decided that a non-profit corporation with a decision-making board, an executive secretary, and other staff, as needed, would serve the state well.

ARKANSAS COMMUNITY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION



2. Conditions, motivating factors

Much had been learned from the earlier partnership between the RCEDP and the SEA. Many strategies had been developed, and the two individuals had identified a variety of ways to combine resources so that local communities were better served. And, while agencies may have written cooperative agreements, it is individuals within the agencies who cooperate and follow through on agreements. The RCEDP Director seemed to be the most appropriate person to head the new state association, the Arkansas Community Education Development Association (ACEDA).

So, while ACEDA evolved as the state association to meet specific expressed needs in the state, it was also an outgrowth of the Winthrop Rockefeller Project. The local people and the SEA felt that there was the need for an association of people with like interests as well as a need for an additional agency/organization to support the growth of community education with funds and technical assistance.

As a private, not-for-profit agency, ACEDA had the capability of utilizing a policy board of educators and non-educators; of funding community organizations as well as public schools; and of generating and administering unique kinds of outside funding. The SEA could provide easy access to local school people, to state discretionary funds, dissemination systems, statistical and demographic data and other state educational associations. As the state network which serves and is responsive to all public schools in Arkansas, the SEA provides the resources for many services to schools.

The characteristics of the state and its resources were strong factors to consider in the development of the association. The relationship of two peers working together, neither of whom has a supervisory responsibility to the other, needed to be considered. Organizational structure and objectives of ACEDA needed to be clearly defined so that the association would develop on a firm foundation of understanding.

In the last few months of the RCEDP, the ACEDA was incorporated; the process was begun to receive non-profit status; and funding sources were identified.

II. The Approach--What We Did

A. Combined sources funding

Initial funding for ACEDA was sought from the Levi Strauss Foundation. Levi Strauss and Company had six plants in Arkansas and was well known for its interest in community. The Foundation had already funded the Fayetteville program, provided money for visitation to the Monticello "model," and supplied the SEA with money to develop an awareness film on community education. (The film, which was produced by the SEA, is used in Arkansas and other states with small, rural communities/school districts for awareness and concept development.) That Foundation's representative was familiar with and supported the community education concept. Contact was made and the Foundation representative met with the SEA Coordinator and the RCEDP Director (who would subsequently become ACEDA Executive Secretary).

The SEA was completing its fifth year of the Mott Foundation's five-year plan. Arkansas had discontinued its affiliation with the Regional Center at Texas A & M, and it was time to re-apply for Mott Foundation funding for Arkansas. The proposal was written and submitted by the SEA, recommending that ACEDA become the Mott Center. The SEA recommended that the state association become the fiscal agent for the "seed" grants and receive administrative money for support staff.

Both the Levi Strauss Foundation and the Mott Foundation liked the idea. The SEA Coordinator and ACEDA Executive Secretary met together with representatives from both foundations. The foundations' representatives liked the flexibility and ease with which budgets could be handled through ACEDA, and the obvious close working relationship between the SEA and ACEDA. (It should also be noted that the SEA's proposal for federal funding was not approved for funding that year. The SEA picked up the Coordinator's position on Title IV-C for six months, after which the position was placed on state funds.)

The SEA has received federal funding each year after that, although no staff salaries are included. In the current year, some travel money is included for the ACEDA Executive Secretary to work with the SEA Coordinator on several projects.

Another funding source which was successfully tapped by ACEDA was federal Environmental Education money. The SEA Specialist for Environmental Education approached the SEA Coordinator, noting that the guidelines for federal Environmental Education money stated that special projects involving community education were appropriate.

The SEA Specialist in Environmental Education had a list of districts who had expressed interest in Environmental Education. That list was matched with a list of districts operating community education programs.

The SEA Coordinator contacted the ACEDA Executive Secretary and set up a meeting with that person and the SEA Environmental Education Specialist. Working together, a proposal was written which would be administered by ACEDA. The proposal was designed to develop Environmental Education projects through community education advisory councils already operating in six communities. The districts' interest and needs were already documented. The proposal which was cooperatively written and involved the six communities in the planning, was funded by the federal government.

The Ozark Regional Commission, in Arkansas, also funded some planning efforts with communities which were planning and exploring school-based development enterprises--administered through ACEDA. A Renewal grant from the Mott Foundation provided the money for the ACEDA Executive Secretary to search out and document human and financial resources available in the area of community economic development. The Arkansas Department of Local Services supported ACEDA with CETA funds to pay salaries for local community education directors for two years.

Other sources have been approached or explored. In all cases, the key has been looking within the state for its uniqueness and its resources, plus cooperation and sharing of information between those individuals who have the same goals and concerns for community education.

B. Flexible staffing

Several different ways of staffing have been explored and utilized effectively by the ACEDA executive secretary. The ACEDA board has been supportive and very willing to approve these strategies. The executive secretary's position and role have remained constant, but supportive staff positions and roles have changed to accommodate changing needs and funding.

Initially, the Executive Secretary and his secretary/bookkeeper staffed the ACEDA office. Both members were paid as consultants, usually approved for six months at a time. The Association rented an office in an office building complex and shared some services there. Another consultant was paid on a part-time basis to assist with project writing, training, and data collection. Various other consultants have been contracted to do specific documents or projects.

When the Environmental Education grant was received, additional consultant time was purchased to develop curriculum and conduct training. In the development of proposals, local school districts have been involved and included in planning and organization. Other resources (i.e., state education agency and other state agency personnel) were often tapped as specific needs surfaced. The SEA Coordinator's secretary often provided assistance to the ACEDA Executive Secretary.

Students at the School for the Blind typed labels for a recent mailout for the Association. Printed labels are supplied by the SEA for mailings to local school superintendents. A local school's

community enterprise is printing conference material for reporting. A conference manager was employed for three months to organize the National Rural Community Education Conference funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

At times, only the Executive Secretary has been on staff, with an answering service or answering machine to take messages when he is not in the office. Financial reports have been done by a CPA on a job-by-job basis.

C. Board governance

The affairs of the Association are managed by a Board of seven (7) directors elected from the membership. The terms of the directors are for two years. Three terms expire every other year, and four expire on alternate years. No compensation is given to directors for serving, but expenses incurred in the performance of duties are reimbursed.

A nominating committee is appointed each year by the President. That committee presents its recommendations to the membership. Members then vote on directors to fill vacant positions.

The officers of the Association are elected annually by the Board from among its seven directors, and hold office for one year. Both directors and officers may be re-elected.

Members of the Board who have been elected in the past have been superintendents, community education directors, state agency people (Employment Security Division Director; State Local Services Director), community college personnel, local advisory council members, and a staff person from the state teachers' association. The SEA coordinator

serves as technical advisor to the Board, but does not vote. According to the Association's By-Laws, Section 5, "The Board of Directors may appoint non-voting advisory members representing interested organizations or governmental agencies, such as the Arkansas Department of Education."

The ACEDA Board of Directors, ACEDA staff, and the SEA Coordinator participated in two planning retreats. A five-year plan was developed by the Board, ACEDA staff, and SEA Coordinator.

The plan outlines the expected development of the Association and its approximate time to "self-destruct."

D. Five-year plan

One of the unique designs of the ACEDA is its plan for development and subsequent demise. According to the planners of the Arkansas Community Education Development Association (ACEDA), successful change-inducing programs take approximately five years. A shorter period of time does not allow for the resolution of inevitable problems. A time period much longer than five years encourages the sort of institutionalization that protects and supports organizations to the detriment of their original purpose.

Since most of the funding sources are ones which are designed as temporary, one-time funds, the philosophy is attractive to federal funding, foundation grants, and other funding sources.

ACEDA's five-year action plan proposes a number of creative experiments conducted by local schools and communities. In its fourth year as a development association, a major thrust is to dramatically increase statewide membership. In another year, it is anticipated that minimal fees from members will support the communication system of ACEDA. By the end of the five-year period, other state agencies and associations will have

been "networked" to assume a collaborative, or "co-laboring" system for community education.

During the five years, ACEDA has provided the leadership for: 1) environmental education projects in six communities, jointly planned between community education advisory councils, teachers, and community members; 2) planning and development of six school-based development enterprises which join schools with community development; 3) national rural community education workshop, highlighted by tours of four rural community education "models" in Arkansas, 4) staffing grants for twenty local community education directors; 5) foundation "seed" grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Levi Strauss Foundation; as well as assisted with projects sponsored by the SEA and the federally-funded IHE project in the state.

III. Enhancing/Inhibiting Forces—What We Learned

A. Networking skills defined

In "Networking, Coordination, Cooperation and Collaboration," Elizabeth Loughran describes three kinds of networking skills. Loughran suggests that networking involves conceptual skills, communication skills, and organizational skills. She describes as conceptual skills: 1) the ability to see how people in other agencies might be useful to you, and 2) the ability to conceive of many things (material and non-material) that you might offer to others.

Communication skills of networking, according to Loughran, include: 1) the ability to persuade others that it is worth their time to stay in

contact with you, and 2) the ability to communicate easily and effectively, particularly in informal ways. Organizational skills are "the ability to conceive of useful, non-threatening communication vehicles (e.g., advisory councils, committees, an occasional lunch, frequent use of the telephone, professional meetings, etc.)"

Basically, then, the conceptual skills of networking are: 1) one's ability to see oneself as having specific unique resources--both individually and as a member of a certain agency, group, or organization, and 2) one's ability to search out and find the same kinds of unique resources in other individuals, as individuals and as members of certain groups or organizations.

The organizational skills of networking deal with one's ability to devise legitimate and appropriate vehicles through which individuals interact. Communication skills of networking deal with the use of the legitimate and appropriate vehicles, and have to do with a person's ability to convince, persuade, or motivate others in such a way that they perceive it is worthwhile to stay in contact with that person.

Networking refers to the interaction among persons and agencies, and involves very loose linkages, according to Horace Reed. Reed, in "Concepts for a Staff Development Design on Networking," describes a continuum which progresses from networking to collaboration. Like Loughran, he describes a continuum with networking, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration. Reed suggests that networking is the most informal and may not be highly visible. He further suggests that collaboration is highly visible and involves strong linkages and much personal contact.

Reed posits that networking results in synergy which he describes as "that which creates a gestalt that is greater than the sum of the

separate agency resources." Reed defines agency resources as "material (space, facilities, wealth) or interpersonal (time, personal energy, ideas, inspiration, support, information)." Synergy involves the "conservation of resources, the sharing of resources, and the invention of resources."

In Arkansas, networking between the SEA and the ACEDA searches for answers to these questions:

1. Who/which agency can perform each task most efficiently, most economically, and serve people most effectively?
2. What resources can be tapped, individually or jointly, to accomplish the needed services/activities?
3. What services/activities can be combined to lessen the cost and/or increase or improve the effectiveness, or both?
4. How can time and money be reallocated legitimately and produce greater or better results?

1. Conceptual skills of networking

In this situation, conceptual skills resulted in the identification of unique resources by the SEA Coordinator and the ACEDA Executive Secretary. Each developed the habit of continuously looking at his own and his organization's resources, as well as attempting to separate out the other's uniqueness. Probably, the two agents in this situation complemented each other in more ways than usual because they came from very different perspectives and different bases. Always the purpose is to develop strategies to better serve local schools and communities.

It cannot be overemphasized that individuals perform these skills of networking, not agencies or organizations. Therefore, it is not valid to assume that lists of resources will transfer from one individual to another individual, either as an individual or as a member of a like group.

As always, the process is important in that it can help to encourage and initiate the conceptual skills of networking. But all state education agencies do not have the same resources, much less all SEA Coordinators! If some of the identified resources are not appropriate for another SEA, then there are probably many more not listed that are appropriate. The listing of resources is intended to provide SEA's and other state agencies or institutions with ideas to adapt to their own situations. This should be seen as a process which may include some resources that apply, or it may not. The following four pages apply to the individuals and agencies they represent in Arkansas.

CONCEPTUAL SKILLS OF NETWORKING

Resources SEA coordinator offers as an employee of the Arkansas Department of Education:

1. Access to the Communications and Dissemination Division of the Arkansas Department of Education.
   A. State newsletter
   B. Computer search system
   C. Regular programs on educational TV
2. WATS line
3. Access to LEA's
   A. Mailing lists (or labels) of superintendents, principals, etc.
   B. Dates/places for educational meetings; easy access to meetings
4. Capacity to write memo from Chief State School Officer
5. Copy machine/print shop
6. Statistical info on schools
7. Credibility with school staffs
8. Travel budget to go to LEA's to provide technical assistance
9. Capacity for technical assistance
10. Access to other state agency, e.g., community colleges, universities, vo-tech schools, State Office on Aging, etc.
11. Several budgets
12. Access to other SEA resources: money (grants, allotments), people, facilities/equipment, technical assistance
13. Access to federal community education office; SEA's in other states

Resources SEA coordinator offers as an individual:

1. Contacts--people coordinator knows well enough to contact easily
   - A. People from same church
   - B. Friends of other family members
   - C. Former employees, co-workers, employers
   - D. Members of same groups, e.g., Partners of Americas, Phi Delta Kappa, etc.
   - E. Neighbors
   - F. Former schoolmates
   - G. Close friends; people who have been "cultivated" as resources
   - H. Co-workers
   - I. People from other organizational memberships
2. Grant writing ability
3. Knowledge of community education statewide/nationally
4. Knowledge of federal legislation for community education
5. Good rapport with superintendents
6. Knowledge of public education in Arkansas
7. Understanding of problems of small and rural
8. Experience in community education programming/process at the local level
9. Familiarity with "models" in Arkansas and other states
10. Knowledge of career education concepts and resources

Resources ACEDA executive secretary offers as administrator of ACEDA:

1. Authority and ability to contract quickly, easily
2. Ability to fund and contract with non-school groups
3. Autonomy
4. Speedy "signoff"
5. Less red tape/restrictions on how money is spent
6. No maximums/minimums for consultants, contracts, travel, etc.
7. Not affected by "freeze" or state government hiring restrictions; can use temporary or part-time staff when needed
8. Not required to advertise contracts, or be approved by state legislators
9. Easier to operate within several different fiscal years
10. Credibility with non-school, community groups
11. Appropriate system for management of foundation money
12. Newsletter distributed to schools and community organizations

Resources ACEDA executive secretary offers an an individual:

1. Contacts--people executive secretary knows well enough to contact easily
   A. People from same church
   B. People in same PTA
   C. Former employees, co-workers, employers
   D. Members of same groups
   E. Neighbors
   F. Former schoolmates
   G. Close frineds; people who have been "cultivated" as resources
   H. People whose offices are in same office complex
   I. People from other organizations outside the state, e.g., NIE, National Rural Center, etc.
2. Grant writing ability
3. Knowledge of community economic development resources
4. Expertise in management training
5. Knowledge of change process
6. Familiarity with "other" funding sources
7. Good relationships with grantees
8. Familiarity with "models" in Arkansas
9. Non-education experience base
10. Understanding of community education

The lists could go on and on, and will change often. Networking is enhanced when individuals continuously assess their own resources--individual and agency--as well as the resources--individual an agency--of the other person. Some of the implications in the Arkansas situation have resulted in networking to combine resources in various ways:

1. SEA advertises grants, disseminates information for ACEDA
2. SEA Coordinator provides technical assistance to ACEDA board; ACEDA Executive Secretary serves on SEA Advisory Council
3. Shared financing on meetings, depending on specific costs eligible to be paid by each, e.g., travel for participants paid by SEA; ACEDA pays consultant, provides social get-together
4. "Back-to-back" meetings when feasible, e.g., state planning meeting begins at 10:00 a.m., with ACEDA grantees coming in at 8:00 a.m. for grant management information
5. Information on legislation obtained by SEA coordinator; ACEDA executive secretary writes local and state people for support
6. ACEDA funds schools; SEA assists with how funds are handled in school budgets
7. Newsletters from both include information from other person
8. SEA supervisor provides information on expressed needs of LEA's ACEDA executive secretary writes for and administers grant, e.g., environmental education grants
9. Foundations grants handled more expeditiously through ACEDA; SEA writes support letters

10. Joint mailings--planning together often results in scheduling needed mailings together
11. Technical assistance is often followed up more effectively or sequenced better
12. ACEDA Executive Secretary assists LEA's to identify other grant money available from SEA, e.g., Career Education, Title IV, etc.
13. State conference was combined with National Rural Community Education Workshop, after out-of-state enrollment did not meet maximum. SEA reimbursed in-state persons for travel, registration fee. Combining meetings resulted in better attendance at national workshop and better state conference for in-state people.
14. Joint planning and joint presentations accommodated for emergency situation for one individual. There is ease in shifting responsibility when planning was done together.
15. More time for individual consultations with participants at seminars or meetings, resulting in better assessments of needs.
16. Survey or evaluation instruments constructed jointly provide information needed by both and requires less time for respondents.

Both the ACEDA Executive Secretary and the SEA Coordinator operate on the premise that each can ask and/or turn down the other, if appropriate. Interestingly enough, there are few times a request is refused. When materials are needed on short notice, it is common for the SEA Coordinator to ask the ACEDA Executive Secretary for the items or item. When there is copying to do; labels, mailouts needed by the ACEDA Executive Secretary, he usually checks with the SEA Coordinator to see if that can be mailed through the SEA along with another mailout.

2. Organizational skills of networking

The organizational skills of networking are defined as the ability to devise useful, non-threatening communications vehicles. The results are many kinds of legitimate and appropriate vehicles through which the two individuals interact.

In the Arkansas situation, there are planned times for specific strategizing. Sometimes this takes place in one or the other's office, sometimes over lunch or after work. There are many other informal devises for interaction. The most informal technique--the telephone--is used almost weekly. Each shares with the other what contacts have occurred, results of the contacts, and planned or expected future contacts. Time on the phone is spent updating each other and planning how activities can reinforce and complement the other's activities. If either has referred someone to the other during the week, this is shared.

Business luncheons with an "outsider" often include an invitation to the other person. If a business acquaintance, consultant, visitor from another state, or evaluator from a funding source is scheduled into town, it is not unusual for the three to meet for a meal or a snack. Informal entertaining often serves a "networking" function. On many occasions, the two individuals update each other in an informal meeting with someone else.

Carbon copies of letters are used extensively. In all cases which relate to meetings with individuals or groups, both memorandums and other correspondence are copied to the other. The effect of the other's name at the bottom of the page is often as useful as the shared information.

When there are meetings out-of-town which both persons are scheduled to attend, the two travel together whenever possible. Driving and traveling time is used to share information and plan.

After the first year of the Association, the SEA-sponsored state conference was written into the By-Laws and Constitution of ACEDA. Since that time, the conference has been jointly sponsored. The SEA Coordinator serves as technical advisor to the ACEDA Board; the ACEDA Executive Secretary serves as a member of the Arkansas Advisory Council on Community Education, organized to advise the Arkansas Department of Education.

When a new resource is approached for any reason, the two usually plan the meeting jointly so that community education can put its "best foot forward." It was discovered that it is quite common for someone to "check on" the relationship--the cooperation, or networking. If one of the two makes the contact and raises the other's name, someone often checks out that professed cooperation. "Do you really work together like you say you do?" is a question often asked of both individuals. It is also asked of others about the two individuals.

The organizational skills, like the conceptual skills, are developed through active practice. There are still obvious vehicles which are overlooked in Arkansas. It's not uncommon to realize the obvious almost as soon as it is overlooked. It takes continuous effort and, even with that, there are avenues which lend themselves well to utilize and which will be overlooked. It is more effective to say, "I should have called you, but just didn't think of it," than not to discuss a meeting which provides information to both parties.

3. Communication skills

The communication skills of networking have to do with the use of the interaction vehicles devised (organizational skills), the ability to communicate easily and effectively, as well as the ability to convince others that it's worthwhile for them to stay in contact with oneself.

The skills of communication which are included as networking skills are those which have to do with persons' rapport with other people. They are the skills which people use to effectively persuade, convince, or motivate others. They are the skills that apply in almost all situations and deal with the individual's ability to retain relationships long enough to develop vehicles to use for networking.

Several techniques were used to communicate informally. At one meeting, the ACEDA Executive Secretary conducted the meeting while the SEA Coordinator broke in periodically to summarize, ask questions of the group, and determine understanding or contribute information. Most meetings of "new" people begin with explanations of the two roles. In summarizing, the statement is usually made, "Call whomever you like--to complain, for information, whatever. To talk to one is like talking with both."

Personalities are a part of networking--there's no way to get around that. Individual communication skills can enhance or inhibit the development of strategies. Basically, it is important that personalitis are:

Open
Able to be criticized/able to criticize
Able to argue constructively
Able to recognize and admit philosophical differences
Able to say "no" ("yes")
Able to change
Able to accept critiçism for what another does
Able to accept having someone else get "credit" for what was originally "your" idea or plan
Able to convince your organization that cooperation is valuable

Good communication skills in networking mean that you can say "no" to the other person when that's necessary, but it means that you do away with the automatic "no's" which refer to ways that "we're always done it." It means active listening and the willingness to change.

B. Serendipities and pitfalls

> Serendipity: The gift of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for;--a word coined by Walpole, in allusion to a tale, The Three Princes of Serendip, who in their travels were always discovering, by chance or by sagacity, things they did not seek.
>
> Pitfall: A danger, difficulty, or error into which one may fall unsuspectingly; a trap or snare.

The effect of the partnership on "outside" resources was a benefit not sought for or expected. For example, the representative from the Levi Strauss Foundation arranged for the SEA Coordinator and the ACEDA Executive Secretary to meet with the representatives from the Weyerhaeuser Foundation. The meeting was perceived as an endorsement from the Levi Strauss Foundation, encouraging the other foundation to support the project also. People in like positions with foundations know each other well and share information on projects and issues, or programs funded. In some cases, there was a "bandwagon" effect, with success in one situation almost assuring success in another.

It was also discovered that foundations like to fund projects jointly. It is not unusual to get a tentative commitment from one foundation which is contingent on another's funding.

Human resources seemed to "transfer." "Contacts" of one person's soon became the other's, in many cases. Outsiders also called one of the individuals about the other. The effect of being able to contact the other's "contact" was often an advantage when one of the two was out of town and not able to call "his/her" contact.

One of the easiest pitfalls is to be "too busy" to phone or plan with the other. For the most part, it's easier and quicker to do it on your own. That makes it easier to do by yourself the next time. Before long, you are

competing with each other for meetings and time. You are penalizing the people to whom you are offering services.

Another pitfall is to "pass the buck" to the other. When the task is unpleasant; it's really "his" idea; and you "don't have the time," it's easy to say, "I can't help you with that." Sometimes it's valid to say that the question/concern must be answered by the other, but there are times when the question/concern needs to be addressed jointly.

Even with persons who work well together, turf can be a problem. It is important that individual identity be retained, and that "using" each other as resources does not deteriorate the respect for each other or mean taking each other for granted. There is a difference between making tentative commitments for another person with whom you are working and taking that person's resources for granted. Constant contact can go a long way towards eliminating turf problems.

C. Recommendations and conclusions

1. The process is significant, rather than specific resources identified by the individuals in Arkansas. It is important to look within one's own state, one's own state agency, and one's own individual resources for implications in other states.
2. Arkansas' communities are small and rural, but that does not mean that the networking skills defined apply only for small and rural. It means look within your state for clues to effective strategies for networking with your resources.
3. Another state's strategies rarely transfer without adaptation.
4. Networking strategies in operation at the state level says that state leadership does what it encourages local communities to do.
5. Build on what you have, what is working in your state.
6. Begin with serving on each other's councils or written cooperative agreements, but expand to identifying individual and organizational resources.
7. Individuals network, not agencies or institutions.
8. Resources are constantly changing, and must be assessed continuously.
9. Most resources of agencies and organizations transfer when individual staff members change. Usually, however, new personnel must make new contacts. Sometimes resources available to another person are not available to the new person. Sometimes more resources are available to the new person.
10. "Outsiders" often check with others to verify if you do what you say you do. Don't embellish the relationship. If you don't do it, don't say that you do. You may never know what happened.

11. It is important that two peers who are networking articulate their roles and relationships. It should be clear to those whom you serve where the responsibility lies for certain activities. There are always specific responsibilities that cannot be commited finally by but one person/agency.

12. When expenses/reimbursements are paid by both agencies, it is helpful if standardized procedures are established. If one has restrictions which the other does not and there are no reasons for the other not to adopt those restrictions, the standardized practice will help to clear up much confusion.

13. When funding sources are approached, both agency representatives should meet with that person, even though only one is requesting the money.

14. Always have a plan, justification. Foundations are probably more subjective and can be approached informally. But, be sure to have an answer when they ask what you want to buy with the money you're requesting.

D. Summary

There are obvious "payoffs" in networking. Money is used more efficiently; people are served better; and agencies/organizations are more deeply involved. Good things are almost certain to occur.

But there are also "trade-offs." It is not possible to network extensively without giving up a piece of one's vested interest. It's probably accurate to assume that no one is totally altruistic, and everyone has some biases. Without a bias for or a commitment to an agency or organization, a person is probably not worth his/her salt. The most difficult part of the entire process is giving up a piece of your turf. It's hard to "let loose" when you know you will be held responsible for the consequences of what another person does.

It's not easy to be criticized for what someone else does, or have someone else praised for what you do. If you expect to network effectively, expect that both of those things will probably occur.

When roles and responsibilities overlap, and there are many functions that can be performed by either or both members of the (two-person) network, it is not always apparent or easy to define the most appropriate way to accomplish the task. Call it "stepping on toes," "turfism,"--whatever you like--it's almost bound to surface.

Society, in general, does not expect people to cooperate, or network. There are occasions when it is extremely time-consuming to explain how billings are to be handled. A joint meeting almost always means that bills are shuffled back and forth several times. Finance offices don't accommodate "partial" bills, and often have to develop new procedures to pay for jointly-sponsored meetings. New attitudes are even more difficult.

Joint decision-making and democracy are not easy. And, just when you think things are going well, that's when people and situations change. There's never a feeling that "We're finally there!"

Authentic two-way communication means disagreement as well as agreement. It means hard work, and it means frustration. It's probably worth it.

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